(b) future plan for phase-wise replacement of diesel by power and details of route finalized;

(c) specification-wise total number of batteries used in coaches and other establishments of Railways indicating total amount incurred in purchase of such batteries annually during last three years; and

(d) method frequency, agency and premises used for testing the life-cycle and other parameters specified for each such category of batteries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Of the entire Indian Railways' route, only 16001 kilometres were electrified up to 31.3.2002. Normally, electric locomotives ply on such routes. However, some Diesel locomotives may also be utilised on these routes depending upon operational requirements. Steam traction is in use on Indian Railways as a regular measure on the 88 kilometers of narrow gauge Darjeeling Himalayan Railways and the 46 kilometers of meter gauge route on Nilgiri Mountain Railway.

(b) The planning for electric traction for replacement of diesel traction is based on traffic volume obtaining, financial viability and availability of funds.

(c) Most of the purchases of the batteries on Indian Railways are done for coaches, locomotives and traction distribution installations. About 45000 sets of batteries are presently employed on the coaches, locomotives and the traction distribution installations. Purchases are made as per the relevant Research Designs and Standards Organisations(RDSO) or Indian Standards Specifications and the value of the purchases for these applications has been approximately Rs.87 crores, for the year 1999-2000, Rs.93 crores in 2000-2001 and Rs.77 crores in the year 2001-2002.

(d) The life-cycle tests and other parameters' tests for these batteries are done as per relevant RDSO and Indian Standards specifications normally at firm's premises under RDSO's supervision.

Gauge conversion in Gujarat

421. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposals for the conversion of some narrow/meter gauge lines in Gujarat into broad gauge have been pending with Government;

(b) if so, the details of the request made by the Government of Gujarat for the conversion of narrow/meter gauge lines during the last [illegible] years; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI [illegible]ARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) No gauge conversion project included [illegible] Budget is pending in Gujarat at present. However, 8 gauge conversion projects are in progress, out of which 3 have been completed and residual works are in progress.

The position of proposals received from the Government of Gujarat for gauge conversion of some narrow gauge/meter gauge lines into broad gauge is given as under:—

Sl. No.	Proposal	Position
1.	Bharuch-Dahej	It is one of the identified project under National Rail Vikas Yojana. Further processing for sanction and funding will be done as per extant procedure.
2.	Bhuj-Naiia	A survey for gauge conversion of this MG line has already been completed. In view of heavy throwforward of ongoing projects, it has not been found feasible to consider this proposal.
3.	Mahesana-Taranga Hill	A survey for gauge conversion of this MG line has already been completed. In view of heavy throwforward of ongoing projects, it has not been found feasible to consider this proposal.

Rub near Narendra Nagar in Nagpur

422. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are aware of existing Railway underbridge near [illegible]dra Nagar in Nagpur which has become notorious for accidents